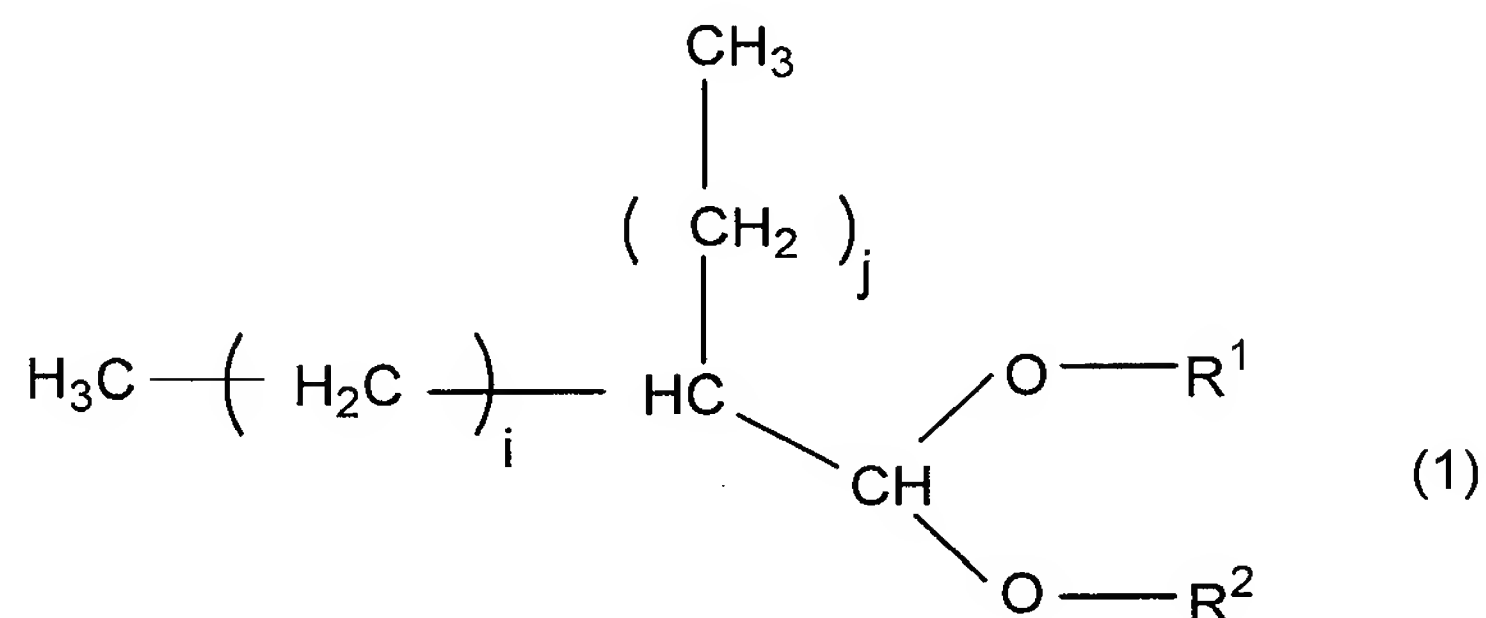## IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:
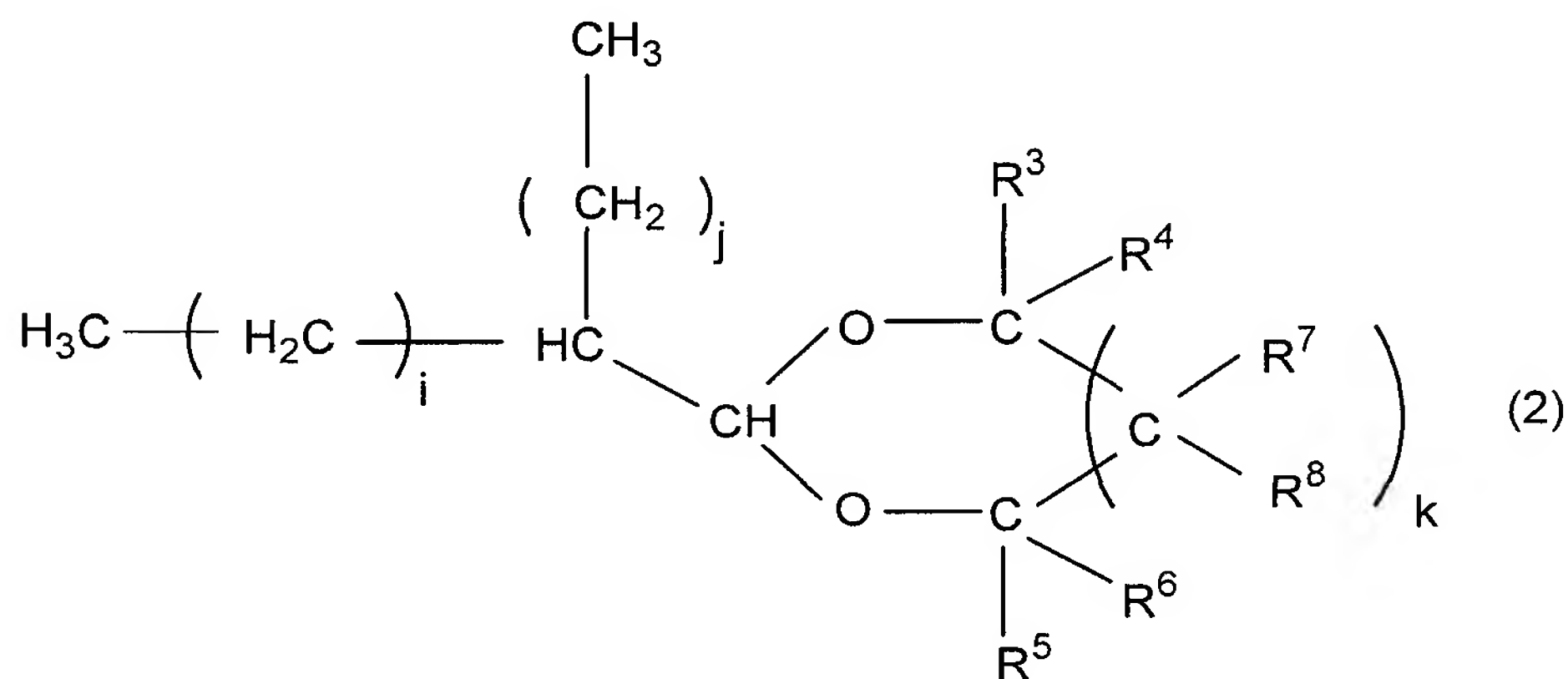
Claim 1 (Withdrawn): An alkylacetal compound having a structure represented by following general formula (1):

(1)

wherein R^1 and R^2 each independently represent a hydrocarbon group, and i and j each represent an integer satisfying a relation that a sum of the integers is in a range of 8 to 98.

Claim 2 (Withdrawn): An alkylacetal compound according to Claim 1, wherein i represents n, and j represents n+2, n representing an integer in a range of 3 to 48.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): An alkylacetal compound having a structure represented by ~~following general~~ formula (2):

(2)

wherein R^3 to R^8 each independently represent hydrogen atom or a hydrocarbon group, k represents 0 or 1, and i and j each represent an integer satisfying a relation that a sum of the integers is in a range of ~~8 to 98~~ 10 to 70.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): An alkylacetal compound according to Claim 3, wherein i represents n, and j represents n+2, n representing an integer in a range of ~~3 to 48~~ 7 to 15.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): An alkylacetal compound according to Claim 4, which is represented by ~~following general~~ formula (3):
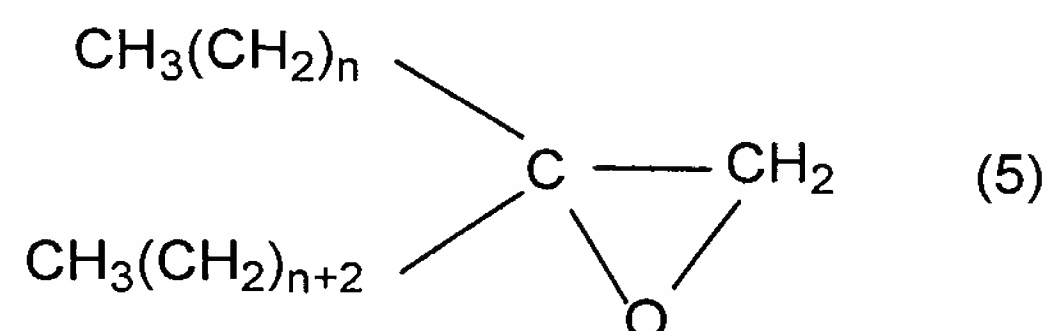

(3)
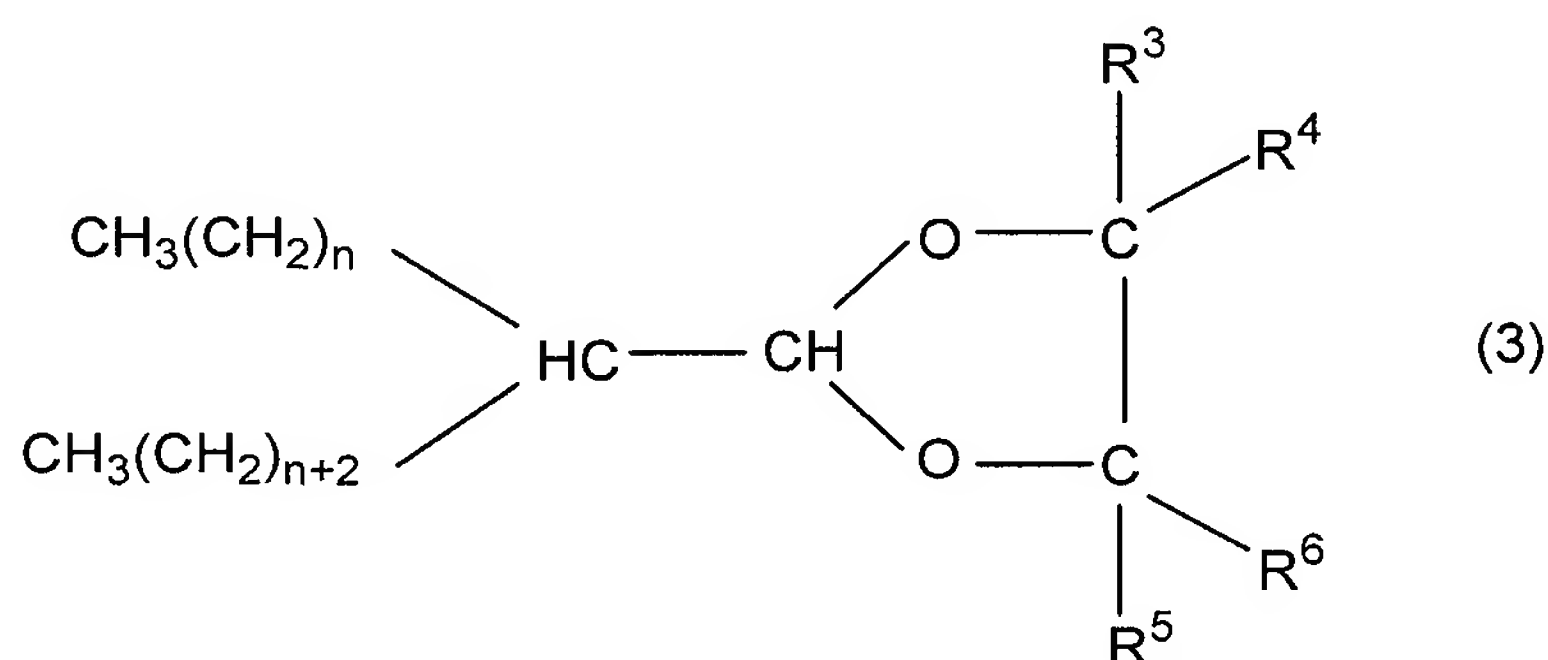
wherein R^3 to R^6 are as defined in ~~general~~ formula (2), and n represents an integer in a range of ~~3 to 48~~ 7 to 15.

Claim 6 (Withdrawn): A process for producing an alkylacetal compound described in Claim 1 which comprises reacting an alcohol with an epoxide represented by following general formula (4):
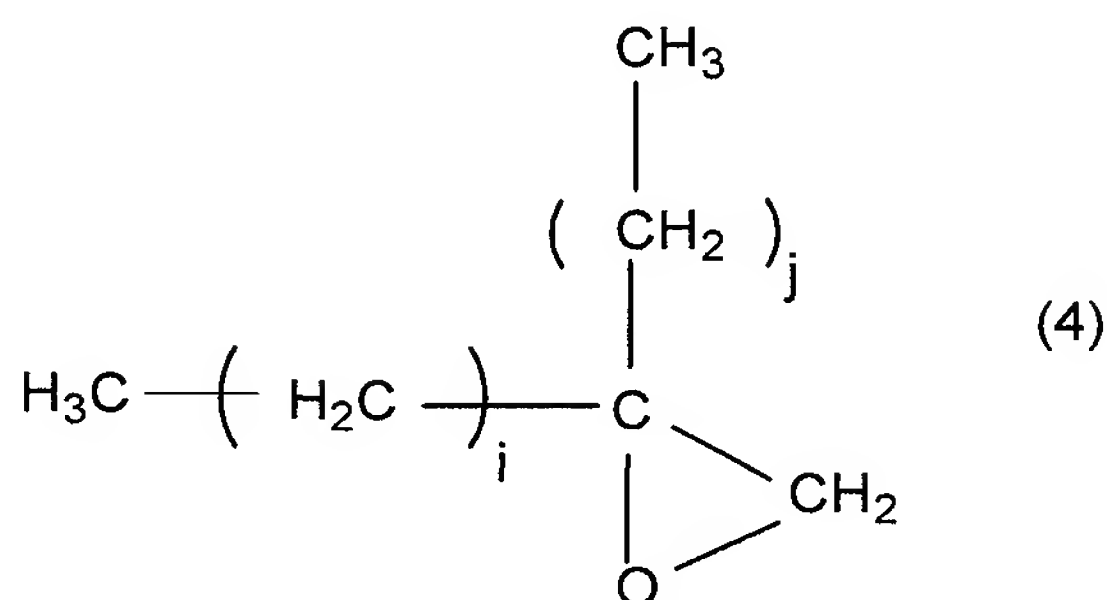
(4)

wherein i and j each represent an integer satisfying a relation that a sum of the integers is in a range of 8 to 98.

Claim 7 (Withdrawn): A process for producing an alkylacetal compound according to Claim 6, wherein the epoxide is a compound represented by following general formula (5):

$$CH_3(CH_2)_n \diagdown$$
$$CH_3(CH_2)_{n+2} \diagup C - CH_2 \quad (5)$$
$$O$$

wherein n represents an integer in a range of 3 to 48.

Claim 8 (Withdrawn): A process for producing an alkylacetal compound described in Claim 1 which comprises reacting an alcohol with an aldehyde represented by following general formula (6):

$$H_3C - (H_2C)_i - CH - C \diagup^H_{\diagdown O} \quad (6)$$
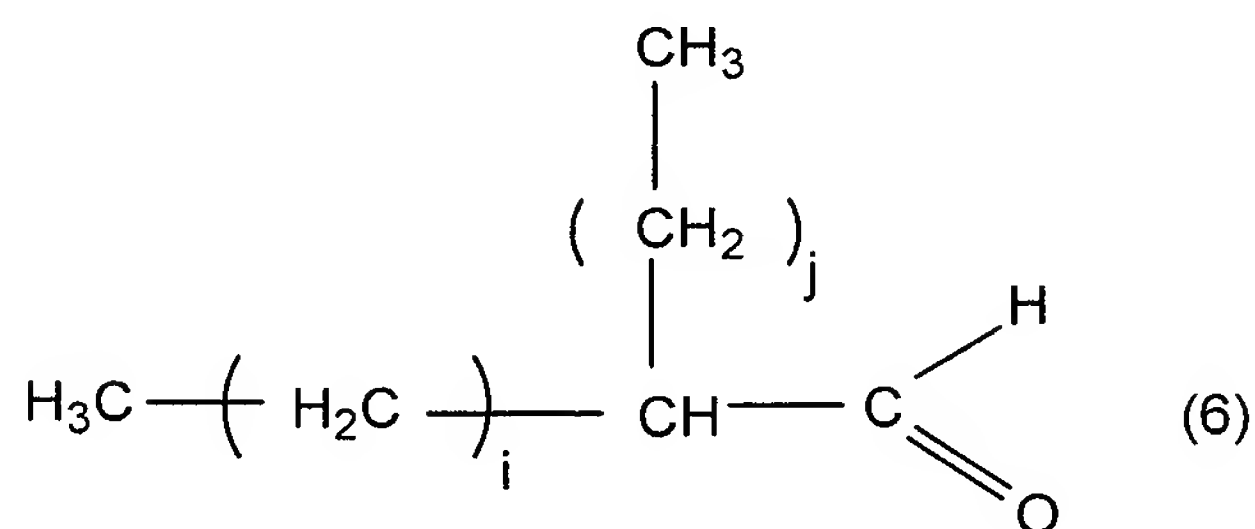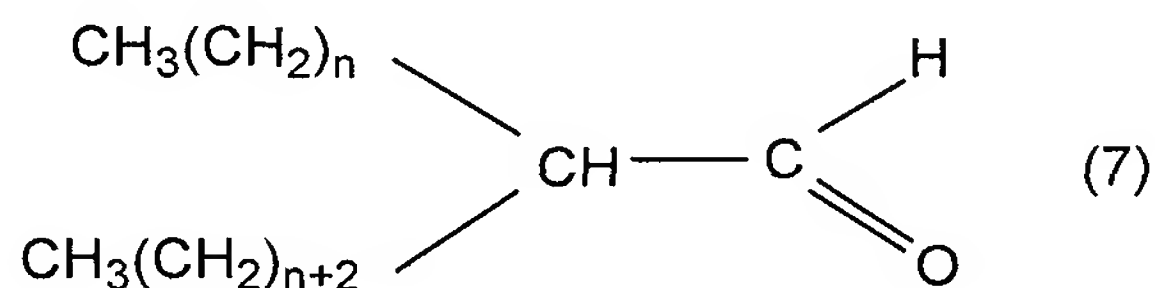$$CH_3$$
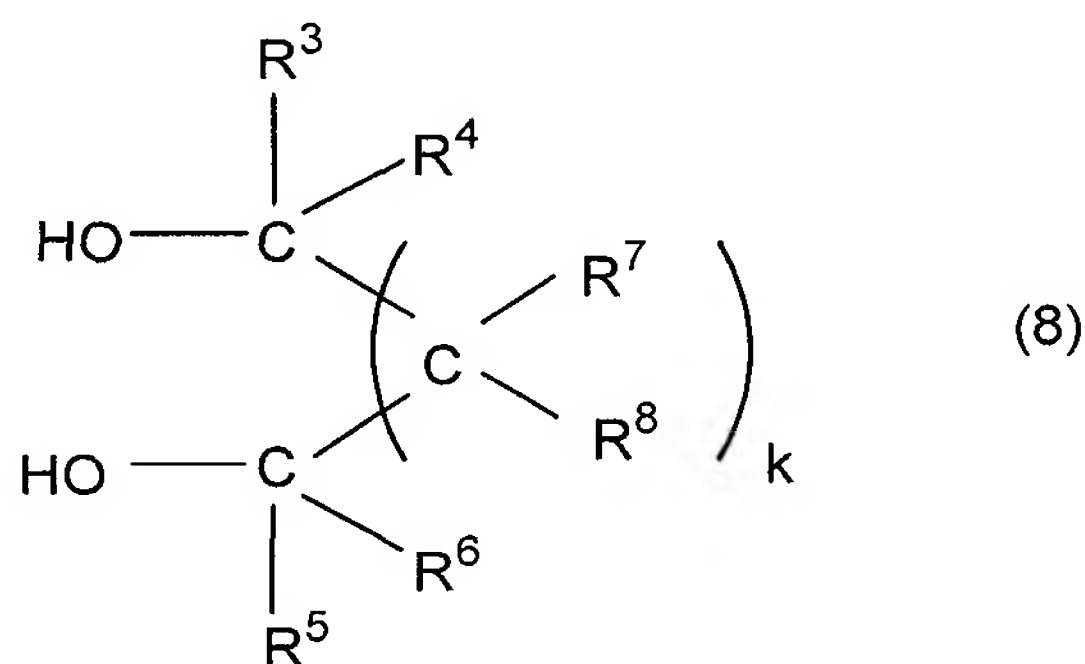$$(CH_2)_j$$

wherein i and j each represent an integer satisfying a relation that a sum of the integers is in a range of 8 to 98.

Claim 9 (Withdrawn): A process for producing an alkylacetal compound according to Claim 8, wherein the aldehyde is a compound represented by following general formula (7):

$$CH_3(CH_2)_n \diagdown$$
$$CH_3(CH_2)_{n+2} \diagup CH - C \diagup^H_{\diagdown O} \quad (7)$$

wherein n represents an integer in a range of 3 to 48.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): A process for producing an alkylacetal compound according to Claim 3, wherein the alkylacetal compound represented by ~~general~~ formula (2) is produced using as the alcohol a glycol represented by ~~following general~~ formula (8):
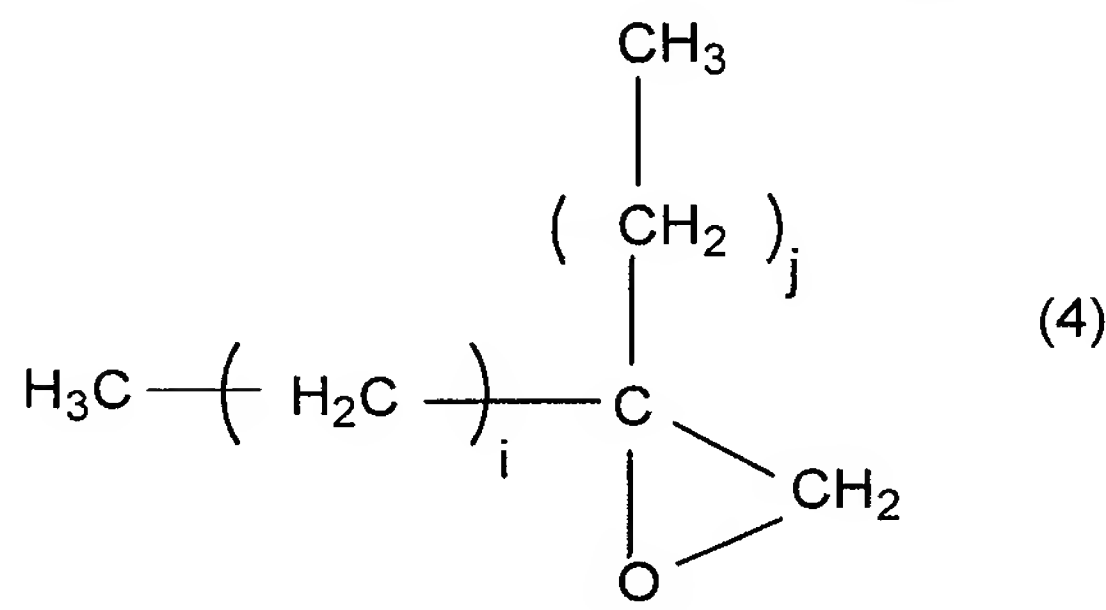
$$
\text{HO---C}\begin{array}{c} R^3 \\ | \\ \\ | \end{array}\begin{array}{c} R^4 \\ \\ \left(\begin{array}{c} R^7 \\ C \\ R^8 \end{array} \right)_k \end{array}\qquad (8)
$$

wherein R^3 to R^8 reach independently represent hydrogen atom or a hydrocarbon group, and k represents 0 or 1.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A process according to Claim 10, wherein the glycol is a compound selected from <u>the group consisting of</u> ethylene glycol, propylene glycol, 1,3-trimethylene glycol, derivatives of 1,3-trimethylene glycol and 1,2-butanediol.

Claims 12-17 (Canceled).

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): A process for producing an alkylacetal <u>compound</u> according to Claim 3<u>, wherein the alkylacetal compound represented by</u> formula (2) <u>is produced</u> by reacting an alcohol with an epoxide [[of]] <u>represented by</u> formula (4)<u>:</u>

$$
\text{H}_3\text{C}\left(\text{H}_2\text{C}\right)_i \text{---C}\begin{array}{c} (\text{CH}_2)_j \\ | \\ \\ | \\ \text{O} \end{array}\begin{array}{c} \text{CH}_3 \\ \\ \\ \text{CH}_2 \end{array}\qquad (4)
$$

wherein i and j each represent an integer satisfying a relation that a sum of the integers is in a range of 10 to 70. ~~as set forth in Claim 6.~~

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): A process for producing an alkylacetal compound ~~described in~~ according to Claim 3, wherein the alkylacetal compound represented by formula (2) is produced by reacting an alcohol with an aldehyde [[of]] represented by formula 6:
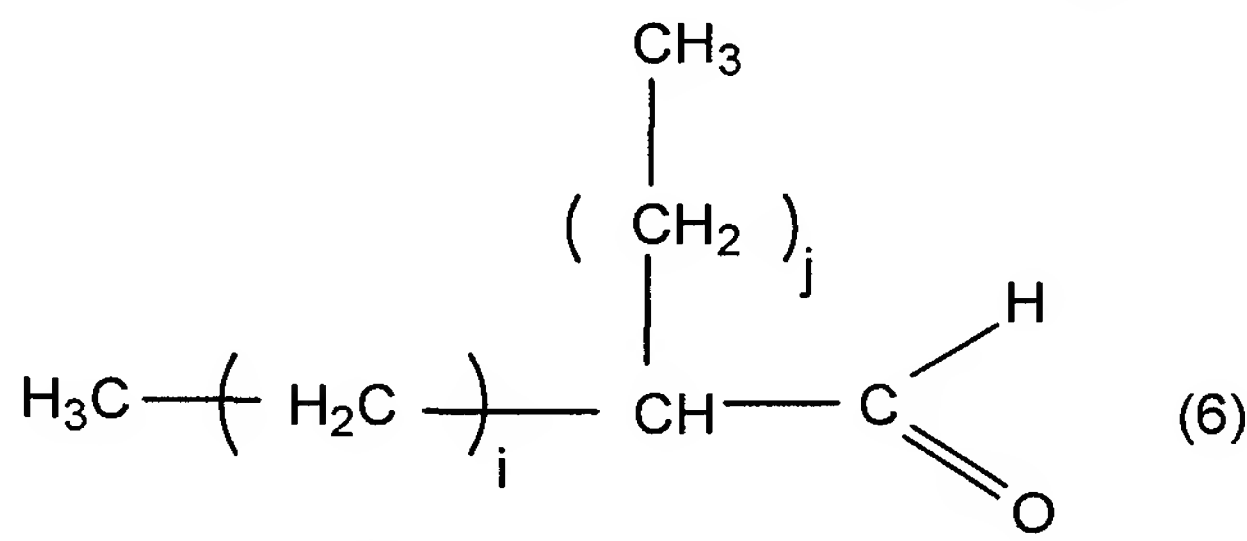
$$
H_3C-(H_2C)_i-CH-\underset{\underset{O}{\parallel}}{C}\overset{H}{<} \quad (6)
$$

with the CH_3 and $(CH_2)_j$ branch on the CH,

wherein i and j each represent an integer satisfying a relation that a sum of the integers is in a range of 10 to 70. ~~as set forth in Claim 8.~~

Claim 20 (New): The alkylacetal compound according to claim 3, wherein said compound is 2-(1-octenylundecyl)-1,3-dioxolane.

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